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#### ARTICLES:

- (1) Defense ministry to request US to present outline briefing of how its nuclear umbrella would function in case of a Japan contingency

YOMIURI (Page 1) (Abridged)  
Eve., March 20, 2007

In order to prepare for a nuclear threat from North Korea or other

country, the Ministry of Defense (MOD) has firmed up its intention to request the US government to present to it a specific briefing of how the US forces would make the judgment to use nuclear weapons should Japan be under a nuclear attack or is in danger of a nuclear attack, and in what way would this be conveyed to the Japanese side.

Several senior MOD officials revealed this plan. The aim is to ensure the reliability of the so-called nuclear umbrella of the US. MOD intends to reflect future operations by US nuclear-weapons units in joint tactical planning between the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and the US forces.

Currently, MOD, SDF and the US forces are moving ahead with drafting a joint tactical strategy for Japan and the US. In the midst of this effort, MOD is thinking of asking the US for a specific explanation of how the US' nuclear umbrella would function.

Since the operations of nuclear-weapons units are top-secret even in the US government, there has never been any specific discussion between Japan and the US regarding such subjects as the operations of the nuclear-weapons units of the US forces, starting with nuclear-powered submarines armed with nuclear warheads. However, since North Korea now has carried out a nuclear-weapon test, MOD, forced now to assume a possible nuclear attack on Japan in a contingency, has made the judgment that there is need to grasp the main outline of operations by US nuclear-weapons units.

A senior MOD official said: "In order to properly put together a joint Japan-US tactical plan, the Japanese side needs to ask the US how it would use nuclear weapons and whether it would really use them in the end."

(2) Informal talks among Okinawa governor, Nago mayor, US consul general on Futenma issue; Details discussed for early relocation of

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Futenma base

OKINAWA TIMES (Page 1) (Excerpts)  
March 20, 2007

Okinawa Governor Hirokazu Nakaima, Nago Mayor Yoshikazu Shimabukuro, and US Consul General for Okinawa Kevin Maher informally met last evening at a hotel in Naha for a three-hour discussion. They there firmed up their intentions to work together to realize the relocation of the US Marine Corps' Futenma Air Station. Regarding the relocation of the airfield to Camp Schwab, as agreed by governments of Japan and the United States, the governor and the mayor reportedly conveyed to the consul general their desire to have the construction site of a V-shaped runway moved to a location as far away as possible southwest from the coast of Camp Schwab in Nago City. They will make this request at a time when the precise location of the V-shaped runway will be discussed. The governor and mayor reportedly called on both Tokyo and Washington to be flexible enough to address the relocation issue in order to break the impasse in talks between the central government and local residents.

After the informal meeting, Gov. Nakaima revealed that the three held in depth discussion on revisions to the central government's proposal, as called for by both Nago City and Okinawa Prefecture. He said, "We exchanged views, assuming a number of possibilities."

Mayor Shimabukuro indicated that three came short of reaching agreement, saying, "There's no change in our position of seeking (to move the construction site of the runway as far southwest away as possible), but the US side told us it would be difficult to do so."

Consul General Maher summarized the discussions this way: "We exchanged views frankly so that the Futenma airfield would be relocated swiftly."

One top-level prefectural government official explained: "The three officials shared the view that it is necessary to swiftly relocate (the Futenma airfield). In order to accelerate the relocation process, all the parties involved, including Tokyo and Washington, must make efforts to build a consensus. Exchanging views was significant in terms of understanding the other side's way of

thinking and position."

On the question of whether to add revisions to the location of the planned runway, this official said, "No specifics were discussed."

The meeting was also joined by Vice Governor Nakazato, Director Fumoto of the Okinawa government's office on base issues and disaster prevention, and Nago Deputy Mayor Suematsu. Maher exchanged views with Defense Minister Fumio Kyuma on March 11. Given this, Maher appeared to attend the session yesterday with Kyuma's wishes in mind.

(3) US' North Korea policy at dead end

SANKEI (Page 3) (Full)  
March 20, 2007

By Masao Okonogi, professor at Keio University

The United States has been forced to make a major concession by turning around its traditional standpoint. Behind this lie such factors as the Iraq quagmire, the Republicans' defeat in the midterm

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elections, and the Bush administration's North Korea policy that has reached a dead end.

Now that Washington has lifted its financial sanctions, North Korea is expected to shut down its nuclear facilities in Yongbyon within 60 days, as it promised. The latest agreement deserves a positive assessment in terms of nuclear nonproliferation. But the accord warrants no optimism, for it does not specify a deadline for the next step -- disabling the North's nuclear facilities -- and it contains many unclear factors.

Through the six-party talks, member countries have decided on energy aid and the United States and North Korea have established a normalization working group. Those developments carry great significance for Pyongyang. North Korea thinks that talks on removing its name from the US list of state sponsors of terrorism and establishing liaison offices in the two countries would be beneficial for maintaining the current regime.

As for relations with countries other than the United States, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il visited the Chinese Embassy earlier this month apparently in a bid to mend relations with Beijing. He is exhibiting a positive stance toward exchanges with South Korea, as well. North Korea is eager to improve relations with countries other than Japan. North Korea has adopted a strategy to isolate Japan, which seems to have succeeded so far. Japan needs to closely watch how fast and to what extent US-North Korea relations move forward.

(4) Sankei-sho Column

SANKEI (Page 1) (Full)  
March 16, 2007

According to Hisahiko Okazaki's book titled Jutaro Komura and His Age, people tend to hold a misconception about the United States. They are inclined to think that America has only one view on a matter. In many cases, a policy is a product of special dynamics in a special environment, the book notes.

Following Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese War in the early 20th century, America's attitude toward Japan suddenly grew cold, reversing its amiable stance. This perplexed the Japanese people. Naturally, because of that war, there was every reason to be on the alert against Japan, which had suddenly become a major power in the Far East. America's sentiment toward Japan also changed significantly at that time.

The book discusses such difficulties in dealing with the United States. Japan was not alone. Okazaki notes in his book: "The great powers of the world were all puzzled and troubled by the treatment they received from the United States, a mysterious country whose diplomacy changed with shifts in the public's mood." That was the

history of international relations in the 20th century, according to Okazaki.

The situation has not changed over the last century. The US Congress, which has been sympathetic toward Japan regarding the abduction issue, is now moving toward adopting a resolution denouncing Japan on the wartime comfort-women issue, as if to give a boost to North Korea. Washington also has removed its financial sanctions on the North, turning around its hard-line stance toward Pyongyang.

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The shift must be puzzling to sensible American people, as well. This cannot be thought of as a firm policy for America to adopt. The Bush administration's futile steps in Iraq have pushed "capricious" public opinion from "pressure" toward "conciliation." The policy apparently reflects that.

Japan must not run about in confusion, however. History repeats itself. A radical change in public opinion is invariably followed by a backlash. Until then, Japan must say what it has to say and uphold its position. The tide can change at any time.

(5) Study at the SDF-Foreign students as key players for security cooperation with Japan

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 17) (Full)  
March 17, 2007

Tetsuro Takasaka, International News Section

The Defense Ministry and the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) have various educational institutions, where a number of foreign nationals from their countries' defense ministries or armed forces are now studying. Nowadays, there are an increasing number of opportunities for the SDF to work together with foreign forces in United Nations peacekeeping operations and humanitarian disaster relief activities. They are knowledgeable of Japan, so they are increasing their presence to bridge Japan and their respective countries.

People in general do not know well about the educational institutions of the Defense Ministry and the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces. However, there are various schools, such as the National Defense Academy and a staff college for each of the GSDF, MSDF, and ASDF. The National Institute for Defense Studies (NIDS), located at Meguro in Tokyo, is one of them. NIDS is a think tank that has many researchers studying the international situation and military affairs. At the same time, NIDS also has a general training course for SDF brass officers-equivalent to the National War College in the United States. NIDS has brought in a total of 132 senior members from the armed forces and defense ministries of 13 countries, including the United States, Europe, and Asia, from 1981 to date.

These senior fellows are trained for about one year. During their training period, they deepen friendship with their SDF contemporaries through lectures, seminars, and training trips in Japan. Generally speaking, those in military organizations like armed forces and the SDF are said to have a particularly strong bonding of contemporary fellowship as compared with those in private businesses. Their friendship lasts long after training.

"The network of personal connections that I had built at that time is now greatly helpful," says Timothy Larsen, 58, who is the deputy commander of US Forces Japan (USFJ) and a major general of the US Marine Corps. Many of Larsen's contemporaries at NIDS in its 40th-term general training course from the fall of 1992 are now high-ranking officers in the SDF. Larsen is now working to strengthen bilateral cooperation between Japan and the United States in the security area as one of USFJ's successive top echelon officers who have the strongest personnel channels with the Defense Ministry and the SDF. "Simply because my job partner is a contemporary of mine, we can get over a number of barriers all at once to push ahead with cooperation," Larsen says. He still has a roster of his NIDS contemporaries that he treasures.

In addition to the United States, Thailand has been deepening security cooperation with Japan through trainees sent to Japan. A total of about 200 persons from the Thai military have either studied at NIDS or NDA. In Bangkok, they often meet for reunions. MSDF and ASDF personnel have more opportunities to stop over in Thailand on their way to missions in the Middle East or in the Indian Ocean. In Thailand, those who once studied in Japan help SDF members in various ways.

The Royal Thai Navy's Cdr. Papon Chan (TN: phonetic), 45, is now studying at NIDS in its 54th-term general training course. This Thai naval brass officer once studied at NDA and the (MSDF) Officer Candidate School. He has been studying in Japan for a total of nine years and will return home this summer. When he is back home, he plans to write a report on what the Thai forces can learn from the SDF.

Among military attaches who are currently posted to the embassies of foreign countries in Tokyo and watching Japan's defense policy, there are also some people who once studied at the NIDS.

Jean-Marc Gerbier, 50, who is a defense attach at the French Embassy and a captain of the French Navy, studied at NIDS in its 53rd term right before arriving at his current post in the fall of 2006. Wolfgang Frischhut, 56, who is a defense attach at the German Embassy and a colonel of the German Air Force (sic), was also a NIDS trainee in the same term. There are various misunderstandings and prejudices overseas about Japan's security policy due to lack of information, so they parked themselves in Japan to see Japan as it is. Their presence is valuable in that sense.

Dan Melton, 46, currently a USMC attach at the American Embassy and a colonel, studied at NIDS in its 48th term. "I visited Etajima in Hiroshima Prefecture on a study tour," Melton says. "And," Melton went on, "I learned there about the former Japanese navy's young people who lost their lives in the war." He added, "That was impressive."

There is also a person who studied at NIDS and later became an expert on international issues. Charles Pritchard, 56, was a 40th-term trainee at NIDS, as well as Larsen. Pritchard, once in the US Army, went over to the US National Security Council (NSC) during the Clinton administration. He is now president of the Korea Economic Institute (KEI), a Washington-based think tank. Mark Fitzpatrick, 53, was a NIDS 38th-term trainee. Fitzpatrick once worked at the US Department of State and is now a researcher at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), a think tank based in the United Kingdom.

At present, eight trainees from six countries-including Papon from Thailand-are studying at NIDS. India, now rising in the international community, has sent Ajitto Bonsle (TN: phonetic), 50, a colonel of the Indian Air Force. In recent years, Japan and Australia have been rapidly deepening their bilateral cooperation in the security area. Participating from Australia is Guy Bowkenski (TN: phonetic), 36, who was deputy chief of an office for Japan and the Korean Peninsula at the Australian Defense Ministry. There are two from the United States, including Jonathan Goff, 41, a USMC lieutenant colonel.

After all, international relations and alliances are both based on

human relations accumulated. It is even more important to network people through foreign students all the more because Japan is now being called to cooperate with various countries in the security area.

(6) Prime Minister's Official Residence's (Kantei) challenge to assume political leadership

ASAHI (Page 1) (Slightly abridged)  
Evening, March 20, 2007

The Abe government should have been made up of many Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) lawmakers who had supported Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in the presidential election. Moreover, Abe's aides should also share ideological motives with him. However, most of Abe's close colleagues were kicked out of the LDP when they opposed former Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's postal privatization plan. Therefore a group of so-called "reform technocrats" now serve in posts as Abe's aides. Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuhisa Shiozaki, 56, and Hiroshige Seko, 44, special advisor to the prime minister on public relations, are key reform technocrats.

Abe visited China and South Korea last October to repair relations with the two countries that had been strained under the Koizumi government. Seko paved the way for Abe's trips to Beijing and Seoul. He held a 90-minute-session with Chinese reporters in Beijing. The first question was about Abe's visits to Yasukuni Shrine: "Isn't Abe's DNA the same as that of Nobusuke Kishi, Abe's grandfather, who served as a member of the militaristic cabinet of Hideki Tojo?"

Seko rebutted, saying:

"Regarding Yasukuni, Abe is a realist. When it comes to DNA, (I want to talk about) Kan Abe, Shinzo's grandfather of his father's side, was a politician, who criticized the Imperial Army and did not join the Imperial Rule Association, standing on his beliefs."

Before becoming a member of the House of Councillors, Seko, succeeding an Upper House seat served by his uncle, worked as NTT's press division chief. He is called a public-relation professional. His policy is to not to tamper with the raw materials. The question is how he uses the materials at hand.

Seko along with Abe struggled with the formation of the new administration. He thought that Abe was not a person like Koizumi, who tended to go his own way, he would be able to appeal his leadership to the public if he was supported by a group of capable people. Base on such an idea, five special advisor posts in charge of public relations, the economy and fiscal policy, national security, education and the abduction issue, were set up. In order to play up "political leadership," four special advisor posts were allocated to politicians.

Since 2003 when Abe was LDP secretary general, Seko has worked on reform of the party, proposing winning unaffiliated voters and advertising candidates for elections. However, party staff members immediately rejected his idea. He now finds himself as a government official confronting bureaucrats.

The duties of special advisors are to advise and provide their opinions to the prime minister. Therefore, bureaucrats think cabinet ministers are more important than the advisors.

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Last October when he thought that he should show the bureaucracy how he was involved in significant national issues, Seko called Shiozaki, and urged him, "Don't you think I should take part in meetings?" "Why don't you come and join us," Shiozaki said. Seko then passed on information handling to his subordinates. He said, "Since then, they have been enthusiastic about their job."

Shiozaki said: "The Abe administration has been working on reforms to create new systems since the Koizumi government destroyed the conventional ones." He and Abe were elected to the Diet for the first time in 1993. Their seats in the Lower House plenary hall were next to each other. He once worked at the Bank of Japan. He was a one of the so-called new breed of lawmakers who were specialists in making policies.

Under Abe's initiative in 2004, Shiozaki came up with three principles for political leadership: (1) prime minister-led cabinet leadership system; (2) elimination of bureaucratic initiative; and

(3) farewell to policy cliques in the Diet. These three points became the basic stance of the Abe government.

However, when the council to revitalize the education system, which is under the direct control of the prime minister, tries to submit its proposals, the Education Ministry moves to reject them. The policy that the prime minister does not meet bureaucrats under their minister without the attendance of their minister has been corrected because the prime minister was unable to get the necessary information. In contrast with the ideals of Seko and Shiozaki, their efforts to display political leadership is in a state of flux. Why?

Norihiko Narita, 60, professor at Surugadai University, who served as policy secretary to former Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa, made this comment: "The Abe administration has adopted the US-style advisor system in Japan, which has a parliamentary cabinet system. I think such cannot work."

Since the US president has strong power, the advisors can do most of things in the name of president. In Japan, each minister is responsible for each ministry. Even if the advisor on education drafts a plan, the plan should be presented to the education minister. If the minister disagrees with the plan, there will be discord between the advisor and minister.

Isao Iijima, 61, policy secretary to former Prime Minister Koizumi, wrote in his book titled Secret Memoir of Prime Minister Koizumi's Official Residence that (politicians) must be able to handle the bureaucracy. Narita said, "I agree with him." Political leadership cannot be realized with just eliminating bureaucratic influence. There is a gap between the ideal and reality. How will the Abe administration fill that gap?

SCHIEFFER